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"Better a Living Judeo-Nazi Than a Dead Saint"
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FROM THE ISRAELI PRESS

[The contents of this section are selected from news reports, articles and editorials appearing in the Israeli press during the quarter. The items chosen illustrate trends on current issues or focus on a specific topic of relevance to the Arab-Israeli conflict.]

☐ "Better a Living Judeo-Nazi than a Dead Saint." An extreme Israeli nationalist explains his view of the world to Amos Oz. A subsequent commentary by Boaz Evron attacks the views expressed.

☐ Street Violence from the Right. Anti-government demonstrators from the Peace Now movement are abused and attacked by right-wing agitators.

☐ Repression on the West Bank. Trials of soldiers reveal recurring episodes of officially-condoned violence on the West Bank.

☐ "Building Haddadland." Military commentator Zeev Schiff describes Israel's moves to lay the basis for future military control of South Lebanon.

"BETTER A LIVING JUDEO-NAZI THAN A DEAD SAINT"

The well-known writer Amos Oz recently conducted interviews with adherents of a variety of different ideologies and political beliefs in Israel and the occupied territories. Most dramatic of these was an unnamed Israeli nationalist in a moshav, *here called "C," who expressed overt contempt for any attempt to introduce concepts of universal humanism into Zionism. Oz presented the thoughts of C mainly in the form of a monologue in the newspaper* Davar *on December 17, 1982. Excerpts from the interview appear below:*

"As far as I'm concerned, you can call me any name you want. You can call me a monster. Call me a murderer. But please note that I don't hate Arabs. On the contrary, personally I feel much better with them, and especially with the Bedouins, than with the Jews. The Arabs — those we haven't yet spoiled — are proud people,

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irrational, cruel and generous. The *zhids** are all twisted. In order to attempt to straighten them up you must first bend them strongly in the opposite direction. And that, in short, is my whole ideology.

"As far as I am concerned, you can give the State of Israel any name you wish. You can call it a Judeo-Nazi state, as did Leibowitz. Why not? As the saying goes — better a living Judeo-Nazi than a dead saint. I don't care if I am a Qadhafi. I am not after admiration from the Gentiles. I don't need their love. I don't need love from Jews like you, either. I have to live. And I intend that my children shall live as well — with or without the blessing of the Pope and the other religious leaders from the *New York Times*. I shall destroy anyone who raises a hand against my children — I shall destroy him and his children, with or without the famous purity of arms, and I don't care if he is Christian, Muslim, Jewish or pagan. History shows us that he who won't kill is killed by others. This is an iron law.

"Even if you give me mathematical proof that the present war still going on in Lebanon is a dirty immoral war, I don't care. Moreover, even if you give me mathematical proof that we haven't achieved and won't achieve any goal in Lebanon, neither a friendly regime nor the breaking of the Syrians, and not even the destruction of the PLO, even then I don't care: it was worth it. And even if, in a year's time, the Galilee is shelled again by Katyushas, I don't really care; we shall initiate another similar war and kill and destroy more and more, until they have had enough. And do you know why all this is worth it? Because it seems that this war has made us hated by the world that calls itself the civilized world. That is it. No more nonsense about the unique Jewish morality, the moral lessons of the Holocaust, the Jews who were supposed to have emerged out of the gas chambers pure and good. No more of that. The destruction of Ain el-Hilweh (it's a pity we didn't wipe that wasps' nest off the face of the earth), the healthy bombardments of Beirut and the tiny massare—can you call 500 Arabs a massacre? It's a pity that the Phalangists did it, we should have done it with our own delicate hands—all those good deeds killed once and for all this talk about being a unique people and a Light for the Gentiles. That was all bullshit! That's it: no more uniqueness, no light and good riddance.

"You should know that I personally have no reason to want to be any better than Khomeini or Brezhnev or Qadhafi or Assad or Mrs. Thatcher or Harry Truman, who killed half a million Japanese using two good bombs. I do want to be smarter than them. Quicker than them, more efficient, but I have no desire to be better than them, or more beautiful than them. You tell me; do the evil men of the world have a bad time? If anyone tries to touch them, the evil men cut their hands and legs off. They chase and catch whatever they feel like eating, and have no indigestion and receive no punishment from Heaven. So from now on, I want to see Israel joining this club. Maybe at last the world will begin to fear me instead of admiring my nobility. Thank God. Let them tremble. Let them call us a mad state. Let them understand that we are a wild country, dangerous to our surroundings, not normal, that we can go crazy because one of our children has been murdered - only one! And go wild and burn all the oil fields in the Middle East! By the way, if it happened to be your child, God forbid, you would talk like I do. Let them consider in Washington,

*"Jew" in Polish—*Ed.*

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Moscow, Damascus and China that if one of our ambassadors is shot —or even a consul or the attache for stamp collections — we may start World War III just like that. And don't be surprised if such an image even gives us some support: in the present atmosphere among the youth and intellectuals in the West, among those hypocrites, those saccharine females, if we behave like this it will mean that we are desperate and angry. And if we are desperate and angry it means that we have been victims of injustice. And if we have been victims, they must rush to demonstrate for us, and to identity with us. That's how the distorted psychology of those beautiful souls operates. Read Franz Fanon! And in any case, with or without support demonstrations for the dangerous and desperate Israel, the main thing is that they will move very cautiously around us so as not to anger the wounded animal. It is high time!"

We are sitting on the balcony of the nice country house of C in one of the well-developed *moshavim*, looking to the west at the sunset burning in the colors of fire, purple and grey. The fruit trees cover us with a lively, sensual scent. We have been served iced coffee in high narrow glasses. C is about 50 years old and is a well-known man of action. He is a strong and heavy man, dressed in shorts without a shirt, his body tanned to a metallic bronze color, the tan of the blond man who lives under the sun. He lays his hairy legs on the table and his hands on the chair. There is a scar on his neck. His eyes wander over his plantations. He dictates his ideology clearly, in a voice burnt by cigarettes:

"And there is something else, more important than the rest. The sweetest fruit of this war in Lebanon is that now they don't hate only Israel. Thanks to us, they now also hate all these *Feinschmecker*-Jews in Paris, London, New York, Frankfurt and Montreal, in all their holes. At last they hate all these nice *zhids*, those who say that they are something different, they are not the Israeli hooligans, but different Jews, clean and decent. Just like the assimilating Jew in Vienna and Berlin begged the anti-Semite not to mix him up with the stinking *Ostjude*, who had been smuggled into the cultural environment straight from the dirty ghetto in Ukraine or Poland. It won't help them, those clean *zhids*, just as it didn't do them any good in Vienna and Berlin. Let them shout that they condemn Israel, that they are okay, that they didn't want and don't want to hurt a fly, that they always prefer being slaughtered to fighting, that they have taken it upon themselves to teach the Gentiles how to be good Christians and always offer the second cheek. It won't do them any good. Now they are getting it there because of us, and I am telling you—it's a pleasure to watch. They are the *zhids* who persuaded the Gentiles to give in to the bastards in Vietnam, to give in to Khomeini, to Brezhnev; to pity Sheikh Zaki Yamani because of his poor childhood, and on the whole to make love not war. Or do neither: to write a thesis on love and war. From now on, we have finished with all that, now that the *zhid* is rejected—he not only crucified Jesus, but he also crucified Arafat in Sabra and Shatila. They are identified with us. And that is excellent! Their cemeteries are disgraced, their synagogues are burnt, all the old nicknames are brought back, they are expelled from all the decent clubs, people shoot into their ethnic restaurants, murdering some of the small children, forcing them to remove any sign that will identify them as Jews, forcing them to move, to change their profession. Soon their mansions will be smeared with the slogan: *Zhid, go to Palestine!* And you know what? They shall go

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to Palestine because they shall have no other choice!

"And all this is a bonus we got from the Lebanon war. Now you tell me, wasn't it worth it? Soon we shall see the good times. The Jews will come. The Israelis won't emigrate and those who emigrated shall return. Those who choose assimilation will understand that it won't help them to try to be the conscience of the world. The conscience of the world will have to understand through its arse what it did not want to get through its head. The Gentiles have always felt sick of the *zhids* and their conscience. And the Jews will have only one option: to come home fast, all of them, to install thick iron doors, to build a serious fence, to have sub-machine guns stationed at all corners of the fence and to fight like devils with anyone who dares even to make a sound in the area. And if anyone raises even a hand against us, we should take away half his land, by force, and burn the other half. Including the oil. Including the use of nuclear arms. Until he no longer feels like fighting with us. And do you know what we shall have at the end of this process? Hold on, you are about to have a surprise. I will tell you what we shall gain in the end: three very good and upright things, things you yourself want to achieve but don't know how to:

1. All the Jews shall live here.
2. There will be full and complete Return to Zion.
3. There will be a real and steady peace.

Yes. And then we shall have peace. And then we shall have whatever we desire.

"And after we finish this chapter, the chapter of violence, then you will be able to play your part. Give us culture and humanist values. People's solidarity. A Light to the Gentiles. Create such a humanistic state that the whole world shall applaud us. Be the champions of morality. That is how things happen—first of all Joshua and Jephthah the Gileadite clear the ground, wipe out the memory of the Amalek, and then the time may come for the Prophet Isaiah with the wolf and the lamb and all that beautiful zoo, but on condition that by the end of things we shall be the wolf and all the Gentiles around shall be the lamb. Just to be on the safe side. . . .

"I only know one thing for sure: as long as you are fighting for your existence, everything is permitted. All that is forbidden is then permitted. Even to drive away all the Arabs from the West Bank. Everything.

"Yes. Judeo-Nazis. Leibowitz is right. And why not? Listen to me: a people that gave itself to be slaughtered and destroyed, a people that let soap be made of its children and lamp shades from the skin of its women is a worse criminal than its murderers. Worse than the Nazis. To live in a world of wolves without a fist, without teeth and without nails is a worse crime than to murder. The fact is that the grandchildren of Himmler, Heidrich and Eichmann live very well and are getting fat. They are even using this occasion to moralize to us. The grandchildren of the great Rabbis of East Europe and of all the humane and pacifist Jews who philosophized so well in Prague and Berlin will not moralize to anyone. They are no longer here. And they shall never be here.

"Go read the poems written by Uri Zvi Grinberg, instead of reading all this olive oil written by Gordon and Martin Buber. Read the poem called 'My God, the Gentiles' father.' Maybe you should learn it by heart. Maybe some day it will save your children. If our so very nice parents, instead of writing books about the love of the human race and singing 'Hear Oh Israel' on the way to the gas chambers, had

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come here in time—and don't fall off your chair—had killed six million Arabs, or one million, what would have happened? Sure, two or three unpleasant pages would have been written in the history books; we would have been called by all sorts of names, but we could have been a people of 25 million here today! That is respectable, isn't it? The writers would have written nice novels, like Günter Grass and Heinrich Böll, about our guilt feelings, our shame and regret, and would have won several Nobel prizes for literature and morality. Maybe the government would have paid some compensation from its oil revenues beyond the Euphrates to those Arabs we didn't manage to kill. But the Jews would have been living in their land! Twenty-five million! From the Suez Canal to the oil fields. And believe me, in spite of our crimes we would have received plenty of offers and proposals from all the bastards, from Moscow and Peking and Washington. In spite of our blood-stained hands.

"Listen: even today I am willing to volunteer to do the dirty work for Israel, to kill as many Arabs as required, to deport them, to expel, to burn them, to make us hated by all, to make the ground unstable underneath the feet of the Jews in the Diaspora so that they will be forced to rush here crying. Even if it means blowing up one or two synagogues here and there. I don't care. And I don't care if five minutes after the whole job is completed and this project is finished, you put me in front of a Nuremberg tribunal. Then put me in prison for life. Hang me if you want, as a war criminal. And then you can wash your Jewish conscience and enter the respectable club of humane, civilized nations who are large, big and healthy. I am willing to take the dirty work upon myself, and you can call me by all the worst names you know. What all of you fail to understand is that the dirty work of Zionism is not yet finished. Far from it. True, it could have been finished in 1948, but *you* interfered. *You* stopped it. And all this because of the Jewishness in your souls. Because of the Diaspora mentality. Because of your Khirbet Khiza* complex. It is a pity. We could by now have been a normal nation with soft values, with humane neighborly relations with Iraq and Egypt and with a slight criminal record—like everyone else. Like the British, and the French, the Germans and the Americans, who have already forgotten what they did to the Indians, and the Australians, who almost totally eliminated the natives, and everyone else. So what is wrong with being a civilized respectable nation with a slight criminal record? This is acceptable in the best of families. And I already told you: I am willing to take the criminal record upon myself. Together with Sharon, Begin and Raful [Eitan]. And I agree that you will then follow and be the boneless pure pink future. You will write redemption books about my crimes. And you will be forgiven! You will be accepted in the best houses! The public will admire your morality! But only after the cannon or my dirty napalm remove from the Indians any desire to scalp my and your children, and after millions of *zhids* are here. And only after this country is large and wide enough. . . ."

At one point . . . I stopped C's monologue for a moment and expressed a passing thought, maybe more for myself than for my host: is it possible that Hitler did not only strike the Jews but also infected

Khirbet Khiza is the title of a classic by Yizhar Smilanski, written around 1950. It describes and condemns the capture of a Palestinian village by the Israeli army, with some of the attendant atrocities —*Ed.*

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them with his poison? Did that poison reach some of the hearts and is it still active? C did not protest and did not raise his voice—he did not raise his voice once during all his monologue and he is said never to have shouted under stress during the famous actions his name is tied to. He replied calmly:

"Listen, my dear, if the famous Jewish mind would spend less time saving the world, fixing humanity—Marx and Freud and Kafka and all those geniuses, Einstein as well—if instead they had hurried ten years earlier and established a tiny Jewish state, a kind of independent bridgehead from Hadera to Gedera, and if they had invented a tiny atom bomb for this tiny state in time, there would have been no Hitler. No Holocaust. And no one in the whole world would have dared touch the Jews. By now there would be 20 million of us here from the Suez to the oil fields. Maybe there would have been no need to use the atom bomb on the Germans and the Arabs. It would have been enough to have the bomb in a Jewish store in a tiny state in 1936 or 1939. And no Hitler would have dared touch a fingernail of one Jew. And all those who died would still be alive, they and their children. Was it really beyond the potential of the Jews in the world in the 1930's to establish a tiny state with a tiny bomb? Maybe we would even have spared the Gentiles World War II. Maybe we would have spared ourselves five or six wars with the Arabs. Listen to what Deuteronomy says: 'And you shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven for multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord thy God'.*"

*Deuteronomy 28, 62.—*Ed.*

A hostile reaction to the comments of C *was expressed by anti-Zionist commentator Boaz Evron in* Davar *on February 4, 1983. Excerpts from his article are reprinted below:*

I owe the reader an apology for taking so long to respond to the views of the man identified as C in the interview he gave to Amos Oz in *Davar* on December 17, 1982. But such views must be countered. In that interview we were served with the ideological and "philosophical" framework shared by a large part of the Israeli society, including people who are placed in central operational positions. I do not think I will be mistaken in saying that this group includes people such as Sharon and General Eitan, and maybe several other officers and senior officials, who base their ideology on the teachings of Tehiya Party. Hence, this is the occasion to confront the ideology seemingly so well presented by C, and to demonstrate that its logic and understanding of reality and of the world are wrong; that it is based on unfounded and sometimes infantile interpretations of history and of world policies, and that it shows a total misconception of the nature of the Jewish people all over the world and of the origins of Zionism.

Before countering C's arguments, I would like to cite some examples of the totally misguided arguments which he employs. For example, he says that, had we established a very small Jewish state in the 1930's, and had we developed a small atomic bomb with the aid of Jewish geniuses, then Hitler wouldn't have dared to hurt one Jew, and we would now have a state with 20-25 million Jews controlling the whole of the Middle East. . . .

Let us follow the argument. Would the leadership of such a very small state have been able to forecast the destruction of European Jewry? At that time people ex-

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pected hardship, expulsions, some murders and pogroms, but no one envisaged such an extreme outcome. Except for Hitler himself, and maybe some of his closest advisors, even the Nazis did not then think in such terms. And such a small state would not even have thought that it could develop military tools to threaten a superpower like Nazi Germany, with which the whole world had to fight for six terrible years. If that small state had developed serious military forces, they would have been destined (like the Haganah) only for defense against the Arabs. That state would also have had to confront the problems of taking in all the European Jewish refugees, and would not have been able to allocate great sums for nuclear research, which in the 1930's was not yet known to be relevant to military aims. . . .

C thinks that the persecution of Jews is the result of anti-Semitic feelings, and that if we could manage to cause anti-Semitism, and the fear of it, we should get many Jews to come to Israel. Thus he comes very close to many who are different from him in many other ways. I can still remember an article written by A. Meged last year which positively cites, as the hope of an optimist, the wish for there to be anti-Semitism, so that Jews will come to Israel. He cannot understand that there is no necessary connection between anti-Semitic feelings and the political expression of them. It is not enough for Israel to behave in a repulsive manner in order to evoke the political expression of those anti-Semitic feelings that are quite endemic to the Christian world. That would require two or three further elements.

1. The first requirement is that all Jews should be identified with Israel, and that is not at all obvious or necessarily so. . . .

2. Hostility against the Jews is not enough by itself to cause anti-Semitic movements. Such hostility must be organized within political bodies holding militant anti-Semitic platforms. It is hard to believe that such movements would be created only because faraway Israel is doing nasty things. They are created only when the social, economic and political conditions in a certain society ask for the creation of parties of a fascist and anti-Semitic character. And they can affect the decision of the Jews to stay or emigrate only if they control the government. . . .

C does not understand the ideological and social structure of anti-Semitic movements. They are always movements of the extreme Right—i.e., those parts of the population that will not be shocked by Israeli atrocities, or may even like them, just as C himself likes the Nazis, though they murdered millions of his own people. Those parts of the population that will be shocked by Israeli actions, and are shocked today, are the same that also oppose anti-Semitism: the Left, the liberals, the intellectuals. . . .

Furthermore, the lesson that C learns from European and Jewish history in our decade is that it is good to be strong and bad to be weak, that the world is a jungle and that you must be one of the strong animals in it, and to hell with morality. This great discovery is known to every baby, and it is fine and well when you yourself are one of the large animals. But when you begin thinking two steps ahead, things begin to get more complicated. Isn't Israel one of the weaker animals? It is strong compared to the Palestinians (no great achievement), the Syrians and the Egyptians, all of them poor, weak, backward countries fighting to overcome the heritage of European and Ottoman colonialism. But Israel is small and weak compared to almost any European state. . . . Our power and our bread depend on the economic, political and military support

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of a superpower. And no matter how much C and his like try to deceive themselves, this support arose mainly from the feeling of a moral debt towards Israel on the side of the United States, and not mainly because of existing interests. During the first years of the existence of Israel, the United States obtained no benefit from supporting us. And even today, when Begin and Sharon are disliked in Europe, the European community does not cut its ties with us and does not destroy what is left of our economy after the games in the stock exchange, the settlements and the war, only because of the feeling of moral duty towards us as a Jewish state. From the point of view of interests alone, Europe would rather have us disappear. All the strength and the moral Zionist power of C grow out of the moral support and consideration he receives as a Holocaust victim. If he managed to get rid of this image and live solely on his sword, he might soon discover that he has no sword. . . .

I did not want to deal with the moral aspect of C's monologue since C himself does not want to mention morality but speaks only in the name of "tough pragmatism." When you try to analyze this pragmatism, as I did above, it turns out to be a primitive nightmare of an ignorant man waving pieces of selective information. His position turns out to be unbased even from the point of view of moral power principles. But I shall end with one final remark on this subject. The remark also has "realistic" implications. The state, or the nation, is not a supreme value as C imagines. The Jews, and not they alone, have proved that they can live according to their independent set of values without a political framework. If the political framework forces you to give up your basic values, those values should come first. Thomas Mann and Bertold Brecht preferred to leave Germany rather than to live under the kind of regime C seems to prefer to any other. A society that loses its human image has no right to exist, in the long run, as we have seen in the case of Nazi Germany, and it cannot continue. The same regime that C wants to establish here means the end of the State of Israel.

STREET VIOLENCE FROM THE RIGHT

The publication of the Kahan Commission's findings on the Sabra and Shatila massacres, with its call for the resignation of Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, polarized the political forces in Israel. On the one hand, the peace movement and the Left organized anti-government protests. On the other hand, right-wing groups were mobilized to confront them. The result was violence against a Peace Now demonstration, during which Emil Grunzweig, one of the protesters, was killed by a hand grenade. One of the Peace Now marchers, Shulamit Har-Even, gave an eyewitness account of the procession that day (Yediot Aharonot, *February 14, 1983*), *excerpts of which appear below:*

As the Peace Now demonstration left Zion Square on its way up through Ben Yehuda Street, it was clear to the demonstrators that this was no regular clash of opinions, nor the regular standard of fringe violence. Even before the Peace Now people gathered for the demonstration, organized groups of violent men were waiting for them, and they were now moving forward in an organized way into the marching demonstrators. Next to me—shouting, whistling, beating. A lot of beating. . . . Shouting: "Begin, Begin, Begin. PLO, PLO, PLO, PLO, Arik, King of Israel. Arik, King of Israel, Arik is Arik.

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